

es, science, fine arts, health, and physical education. The California League of Women Voters' president fretted that under 174 "anyone can open a school, even someone without an educational degree" and called this a "formula" for "massive fraud and abuse." Too much has been written about Schools of Education for anyone to be much impressed by education degrees. As for "fraud and abuse," the place to begin that discussion is the case of Bill Honig.

3) What really worried voters, especially those suburban Republicans, was the Big Lie that 174 would "devastate public schools" financially, forcing "massive tax increases" because \$2,600 would go to students now in private schools who currently receive nothing. But this ignores the enormous subsidy that California's 550,000 private school students, or, really, their taxpaying parents, now provide to government schools. By obtaining their education outside the system, these more than one-half million students each save the state system \$5,200 annually, a total of \$2.86 billion per year. CTA pretends these students have no claim on state education dollars, but would fight to the death any proposal that their parents be exempted from paying education taxes. CTA arithmetic counts on spending their tax dollars, but ignores the responsibility those dollars place on the state to provide education in return. Proposition 174 would have reduced this unfair subsidy by half, leaving government schools still saving \$1.43 billion, or \$2,600, per private school student, every year.

OF COURSE, CTA is a labor union and, as such, tends to bypass such matters of basic fairness as not relevant to its essential mission. Also, it is true the initial shock of having to fulfill even half its responsibility to these students in private schools would have traumatized the government system, long accustomed, as it is, to receiving a free

## Notebook

### An Air-Bag's Farewell

DAVID ROBERTI is wrapping up his state Senate career with a furious, final round of his trademark name-calling, complaining that the recall measure against him is the work of "gun fanatics." Over the years, people who disagree with Poppa Robby have grown accustomed to his calling them "fat cats," "fanatics," and other such pejoratives while ignoring the substance of their disagreement. His wide command of cliché put-downs has earned the old boy wide respect among the state's political writers who like to feed their readers quick bombast, leaving the serious stuff to, well, others .... San Luis Obispo Assemblywoman **Andrea Seastrand** has announced she will run for California's 22nd congressional district (Santa Barbara-area) seat being vacated by Representative **Michael Huffington** who is running for **Dianne Feinstein's** U.S. senate seat this year. A strong conservative, Seastrand will probably go to Congress if she wins the primary in this heavily Republican district .... A genuinely diverse group of women has come together to form a new national organization, **The Women's Freedom Network**. In unmistakable contrast to the politically correct conformity of radical-left feminist organizations, WFN's national governing board includes what the group's newsletter describes as "libertarians, liberals and communarians and conservatives."

AMONG ITS members are: **Jeane J. Kirkpatrick**, syndicated columnist **Mona Charen**, *Reason* editor **Virginia Postrel**, Pacific Research Institute President **Sally Pipes**, scholar and journalist **Jean Bethke Elshain**, and syndicated columnist **Joanne Jacobs**. The unifying thread holding all this diversity together appears to be a shared distaste for the radicals' denial of individual responsibility, of women portrayed as sheep in need of a protective state shepherd: "creeping paternalism ... under a feminist guise," as WFN's "Statement of Purpose" puts it.

This could prove to be a potent group, if it can hold together, which may not be easy. Hints of tension pop up here and

there in its official pronouncements, for instance: "We agree that greater flexibility of sex roles enriches our lives, but this does not mean that we look down on women who find fulfillment in the traditional female role." This patronizing attempt to paper over two diametrically opposed positions is asking for trouble. It treats the first as a serious proposition, indulgently dismissing the second, which is stated not as an idea or argument, but as a "preference" for a "traditional role" that one does not debate intelligently but only does or does not "look down on." Such serious disagreements cannot be reconciled and, given the group's apparent objectives, don't have to be. Why not limit the "Statement" to points on which the members agree? Self-inflicted wounds can destroy it.

(WFN, 4410 Massachusetts Ave Ste 179, NW, Washington DC 20016.



THE Inland Empire Conservative Coalition will follow up its highly successful 1993 meeting with a second Annual Conference March 19, 1994, at the Red Lion Inn in Ontario. Issues to be debated include crime and health care. Good opportunity for, forgive us: networking. (Write: IECC, PO Box 2924, Riverside, CA 92516, or call: **Kristine Anderson** at 619/481-2247) .... Orange County Assemblyman **Tom Umberg** has been carpet-bombed by the *OC Register* over his wiggling and posturing between Sacramento and Garden Grove on issues from anti-crime legislation to illegal aliens. A loyal **Willie Brown** manservant in the capitol, Umberg is a master at ladling-out conservative-sounding applesauce back in the district. Things began to unravel when he fed his standard conservative line to two LA-Orange County radio talk show hosts who later became furious upon finding they'd been hoodwinked. Their anger, vented over Southern California's air waves, stimulated *Register* editorialists who have since thumped Umberg with a series of disrespectful opinion pieces, one bearing the simple headline: "What a jerk!"

CPR

## *Sacramento Spectator*

### Fool Me Twice?

WITH THE occurrence of another natural calamity, the quaint aboriginal tribe located in Sacramento called Legislators are preparing to respond in the only way they know — with a ritual sacrifice of taxpayers. This small but powerful group of natives — there are only 120 of them in the entire state — periodically disembowel innocent taxpayers in a tribute to their ancient god, Big Government.

When conservative anthropologists pointed out to the tribe leaders, Chief Brown and Bwana Roberti, that past taxpayer sacrifices have had no effect on the appetite of Big Government, the rest of the tribe went into a frenzy of spear rattling, shield waving, and wild chanting of their protective mantra, "more taxes, more taxes, decade of greed begone, feed Big Government."



The above unfortunately is about the level of debate that's been allowed in the Legislature about responding to the recent earthquakes. It has been treated as a "given" by the Democrats and their media megaphones that the only reasonable response is a "temporary" sales tax increase. They even manage to say "temporary" with a straight face.

The last "temporary" sales tax increase is of course now part of the state constitution! We're promised that this one will be different. Scouts' honor! Brings to mind the resistant maiden being promised respect and love "in the morning" by her date. It will be interesting to see if Governor Wilson and his small group of "good government" followers among GOP legislators allow themselves to be seduced once again ... leaving the taxpayers with the remorseful morning after.

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"BACKPEDDLER OF the month" award for January goes to state Senator Cathie Wright. Wright, running for lieutenant governor, is furiously trying to re-establish her conservative credentials. During her last years in the Assembly, Wright decided to make her own separate accommodation with Speaker Willie Brown, and became his eyes

and ears in the GOP caucus. It got so bad that Republican staff used to run a pool on how many minutes would pass after GOP caucus meetings before Wright would be seen entering Brown's office.

Since her election to the state Senate in 1992, Wright has continued her estrangement from the conservative bloc in Sacramento. She has aligned herself with Pete Wilson and other "big tent" types in internal GOP fights. She has made no secret of her contempt for us "old fashioned reactionaries."

Well, it seems that she's decided she needs us old reactionaries in her bid for statewide office. The governor's office, after a brief romance with her candidacy, is searching elsewhere (Orange County Sheriff Brad Gates is often mentioned). Statewide conservative leaders, who had started to coalesce around Sonny Bono, began also searching for a candidate after Bono opted instead to run for Congress. Wright, meanwhile, is busy telling conservative leaders that the past has all been a "misunderstanding." Her actions were based on problems she had with "personalities" among the conservative leadership in Sacramento, and not an abandonment of basic conservative principle.

Her protestations are about as convincing as Willie Brown's and David Roberti's promise that a sales tax increase will be only temporary. Both of these situations remind your *Spectator* of the old saw "fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me." Roberti, Brown, and Wright have all fooled us once. That ought to be enough.

I'LL LEAVE you with two delicious bits of gossip to ponder. The long simmering stylistic differences between Pete Wilson and Dan Lungren are close to the boiling point. Seems Wilson's staff asked for an "advance" look at Lungren's legislative package. Oddly enough, a week later Wilson's anti-crime legislative package contained *every one* of Lungren's proposals, many of which hadn't been introduced yet! The A.G. was not amused ... peace talks are going on.

The other item concerns the Clinton Administration's rumored choice for U.S. marshal for California. He is J. Enamoto, who previously served as director of Corrections for Jerry Brown. Enamoto was so bumbling in that job and such a bleeding heart that Brown had to fire him in the face of a unanimous resignation threat by every prison warden in the state. This might be fine by Arkansas standards, but law enforcement professionals in California of all political stripes are appalled ... perhaps appalled enough to make a major stink if this appointment comes through. Stay tuned.

—A.P.C.